

# LEAD *Educator*

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

WINTER 2002



## Mission Statement:

The LEAD *Educator* is a quarterly publication of the Long Beach Childhood Poisoning Prevention Program.

Our goal is to provide news and information about childhood lead poisoning prevention measures for parents, childcare providers and the medical community.

In addition, we provide the latest lead poisoning screening and legislative measures.



## News:

### *Increased Reimbursement for Lead Testing:*

The Child Health and Disability Prevention Program (CHDP) instituted a series of policies, (codes 23, & 24) designed "to encourage CHDP providers to comply with requirements for blood lead testing and counseling on lead poisoning and to facilitate program monitoring." Government assisted health care providers are required to provide blood lead tests to children under the age of six. According to the CHDP Administration and the Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Branch (CLPPB), CHDP enrolled health care providers must ensure that their 12 and 24 month-old patients receive blood lead tests. These policies also require that health care providers give parents nutrition counseling, lead poisoning prevention strategies and laboratory referrals.

The CHDP Administration has always encouraged lead testing in children. In the past, CHDP providers were entitled to \$4.95 as compensation for every venipuncture or fingerstick blood draw. However, the new policies (effective September 1, 2001) will increase this amount significantly. Code 23 states that a greater reimbursement of **\$18.73** will be awarded to providers who draw blood and counsel parents at their facilities. On the other hand, Code 24 states that a provider should refer children to a laboratory for lead testing and also provide lead counseling for parents.

### *Healthy Homes:*

The Healthy Homes Initiative designed to control or eliminate household hazards leading to asthma, lead poisoning and unintentional injuries for those living in Long Beach' 90813 zip code. The program identifies homes with children at greatest risk for asthma and provides education on prevention and/ or reduction of household hazards. For additional information about the Healthy Homes Initiative please call (562) 570-4089.

## Health Education:

### *Reducing Lead Exposures in the Home*

Most childhood lead poisoning cases in California are the result of children ingesting lead based paint chips and/or dust from their homes. For many years the paint industry used lead as an anti-corrosive additive in household paint. Although the Federal Government prohibited the use of lead in paint in 1978, it is estimated that some 43,700\* children in California under the age of six currently reside in lead “high risk” zones, which are areas of the state with the highest percentage of older housing. Due to the high number of older homes in Long Beach, we have several high-risk zones throughout the city. Lead poisoning is extremely harmful, especially to young children. Low levels of lead exposure can have serious life-long effects on a child’s growth, ability to learn, and behavior. The good news for parents is that lead poisoning is one of the most preventable childhood diseases. There are simple steps parents and other caretakers can take to prevent childhood lead poisoning, such as washing children’s hands with soap and water before every meal, keeping the home and children’s toys free of dust and dirt, and providing children with nutritious meals. Furthermore, a blood lead test is the only way to identify and confirm lead. Remember to speak with your doctor today!

\* Environmental Working Group (March, 2000)

### *National Lead Week 2001*

The Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program (CLPPP) and the Long Beach Department of Health and Human Services sponsored the ***National Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Week***, October 21 to 27, 2001. This year, the Nursing Division staff and nursing students from California State University, Long Beach participated in the week’s 23 parent-education campaigns at WIC centers all over Long Beach. Thanks to their efforts, some 350 parents were educated about the effects of lead poisoning in young children and important prevention strategies.

### *Information on the Web:*

California Department of Health Services  
<http://www.dhs.ca.gov/childlead/>

Alliance to end Childhood Lead Poisoning  
<http://aeclp.org>

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
<http://epa.gov/opptintr/lead/>

## **LEAD***Educator*

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